

Message Text

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66

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-13 SSC-01 DRC-01 /141 W

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R 211535Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8505

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 3476

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PO

SUBJ: PM CAETANO FILLS TWO VACANCIES ON COUNCIL
OF STATE

REF: LISBON A-169 OF SEPT. 7, 1973

SUMMARY: PM CAETANO HAS FILLED TWO OF FOUR VACANCIES
ON COUNCIL OF STATE. APPOINTMENTS ARE DESIGNED TO
STRENGTHEN CAETANO'S OWN POSITION WHILE PLACATING
RIGHT-WING. END SUMMARY

1. GOP ANNOUNCED SEPT. 20 PRESIDENT THOMAZ HAD NAMED
OVERSEAS MINISTER JOAQUIM SILVA CUNHA AND FORMER PUBLIC
WORKS MINISTER AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF MOZAMBIQUE
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EDUARDO DE ARANTES E OLIVEIRA TO COUNCIL OF STATE.

AS REPORTED REFAIR, MONTH AGO PM CAETANO ISSUED DECREE GIVING PRIME MINISTER POWER TO MAKE NOMINATIONS FOR PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTMENTS TO COUNCIL (POWER HAD PREVIOUSLY RESIDED IN CABINET AS A WHOLE).

2. SILVA CUNHA, 53, HAS BEEN OVERSEAS MINISTER FOR 8 YEARS. HE IS SAID TO HAVE SOFTENED HIS HARD LINE SALAZARIST THINKING IN RECENT YEARS, BUT IS STILL CONSIDERED A CONSERVATIVE AND A FOOT-DRAGGER ON ISSUE OF AUTONOMY FOR OVERSEAS PROVINCES. HE IS, HOWEVER, A FULLY DEPENDABLE CAETANO LOYALIST AND PERSONAL FRIEND OF P.M.

3. ARANTES E OLIVEIRA, 66, IS LOW PROFILE SALAZARIST POLITICO. HE WAS PUBLIC WORKS MINISTER FOR 14 YEARS UNDER SALAZAR (1954-67), AND SUBSEQUENTLY PRESIDENT OF OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (1967-69). HE SERVED 22 MONTHS AS GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF MOZAMBIQUE, RETIRING IN OCTOBER 1971. IN APRIL 1973 CAETANO PUT ARANTES E OLIVERIA ON EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF ANP, GOVERNMENT'S POLITICAL ORGANIZATION.

4. COMMENT: AS USUAL CAETANO HAS SOUGHT TO AVOID ANTAGONIZING PORTUGUESE RIGHT WING WHILE TIGHTENING HIS GRASP ON POLITICAL MACHINERY. ALTHOUGH AT LEAST ONE, BUT MORE PROBABLY BOTH, OF THE NEW COUNCIL OF STATE MEMBERS ARE CAETANO SUPPORTERS, THEY HAVE SOUND SALAZARIST CREDENTIALS AND ARE THUS ACCEPTABLE TO THE FAR RIGHT AND PRESIDENT THOMAZ IN PARTICULAR. AT PRESENT, THERE ARE TWO MORE VACANCIES ON COUNCIL OF STATE. (LISBON A-33 OF MARCH 2, 1973, GIVES POWERS OF COUNCIL OF STATE AND BIO DATA ON CURRENT MEMBERS.)
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